

success, and ensure that they receive the highest quality of education.

TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL L. GRAVELY, JR., FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN U.S. NAVY FLAG OFFICER

### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 18, 2009

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today, to recognize the christening of the USS Gravelly, the 57th Arleigh Burke class Aegis Guided Missile Destroyer, in honor of the late Vice Admiral Samuel L. Gravelly, Jr.

Samuel L. Gravelly, born in Richmond, Virginia in 1922, was the first African American to command a fighting ship (USS Falgout) and to command a major warship (USS Jouett). As a full commander, he made naval history in 1966 as the first African American commander to lead a ship—the USS Taussig—into direct offensive action. He was the first African American to achieve flag rank and eventually Vice Admiral.

In 1942, Gravelly interrupted his education at Virginia Union University and enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He attended Officer Training Camp at the University of California in Los Angeles after boot camp at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station in Illinois, and then midshipman school at Columbia University. When he boarded his first ship in May of 1945, he became its first African American officer.

In 1945, when his first ship reached its berth in Key West, Florida, he was specifically forbidden entry into the Officers' Club on the base. Gravelly survived the indignities of racial prejudice and displayed unquestionable competence as a naval officer.

Vice Admiral Gravelly's tenure in the naval service was challenged with the difficulties of racial discrimination. As a new recruit, he was trained in a segregated unit; as an officer, he was barred from living in the Bachelor's Officers' Quarters.

Gravelly exemplified the highest standards and demanded very high standards from his crew. Vice Admiral Gravelly was a trailblazer for African Americans in the military arena. He fought for equal rights quietly but effectively, letting his actions speak for him. Vice Admiral Gravelly died on October 22, 2004, at the naval hospital in Bethesda, Maryland.

Samuel L. Gravelly, Jr.'s performance and leadership as an African American naval officer demonstrated to America the value and strength of diversity. Gravelly was a true professional with superb skills as a seaman and admirable leadership attributes. His spirit aboard the USS Gravelly will be an inspiration to its crew, the United States Navy, and America for generations to come.

### HONORING CLEO ZENT

### HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 18, 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Cleo Estelle King Zent of

Petaluma, California, for an unusual accomplishment. Cleo just celebrated her 100th birthday, an event few people have the opportunity to enjoy.

There is no one secret to Cleo's longevity. Cleo maintains that genetics and a healthy lifestyle have kept her spry. She always avoided alcohol and tobacco use and, since she never drove, she got her exercise by walking everywhere. Cleo's positive outlook has also allowed her to experience ten fulfilling decades of life.

Cleo, daughter of Hugh and Laura Walker King, was born in Floyd, New Mexico on April 9, 1909. Her father was a leading citizen who championed education and promoted school issues among voters.

In 1927, Hugh and Laura King moved the family to Rio Vista, California where Hugh and his sons worked for Speckels Sugar Company until moving to Lodi, California three years later.

Following Prohibition, Cleo worked as a waitress in a local coffee shop where local winemakers gathered for breakfast and conversations. Cesar Mondavi and August Sebastiani were among Cleo's customers.

On May 2, 1942, Cleo married Claude R. Zent. The couple spent most of the World War II years in Alameda, where Claude worked as an electrical engineer at the Naval Air Station. Their first son, William R. Zent, was born in 1945, followed by the birth of Jack Zent in 1948.

After the War, the Zent family moved to a 12-acre plot of land just outside the city of Petaluma and Claude transferred his employment to the Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo.

For the next twenty years, Cleo and her family spent their time building and improving their homestead. According to Cleo, for years their house looked like they were just moving in or just moving out. When Cleo's dreams for her home were almost realized in 1966, Claude died of a brain hemorrhage. Cleo remained on the family's property walking to and from the grocery store, mowing the lawn and maintaining her home until she was in her 90s.

Today, Cleo lives in the Golden Living Care Home in Petaluma and she shares her life with her sons and her four grandchildren, Caryn Estelle, Kevin, Christy and Christopher Zent.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to honor Cleo Zent whose experience is a testament to the fact that a healthy lifestyle and optimistic outlook can lead to a long and fulfilling life. Happy Birthday, Cleo!

### MELISSA TEBEAU

### HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 18, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Melissa Tebeau who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Melissa Tebeau is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Melissa Tebeau is exemplary of the type of achieve-

ment that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Melissa Tebeau for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication she has shown in her academic career to her future accomplishments.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD RECEIVES HONOR

### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 18, 2009

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am grateful to recognize the South Carolina Army National Guard's 218th Brigade Combat Team who was recently honored with the Joint Meritorious Unit Award. Presented by the Department of Defense's Joint Chiefs of Staff, this award is given to units that have achieved distinction in their duties and is the second highest award given to a military unit.

The 218th, led by Major General Bob Livingston, served for a year in Afghanistan as part of Task Force Phoenix advising and training Afghan police and army forces. As a result of their heroic and dedicated service, Afghanistan has doubled the size of its army to 52,000 troops, and the number of Afghan police officers killed in action each month has been cut dramatically.

As a 28 year veteran of the 218th, I want to extend my gratitude and that of the entire nation to Major General Stan Spears, commander of the South Carolina National Guard, Major General Livingston, his brave soldiers and their families for their tremendous commitment to protecting American families by defeating terrorists overseas.

### TRIBUTE TO KEVIN FAHEY

### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 18, 2009

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, for the past 30 years, Kevin Fahey has dedicated his personal and professional life to the students and faculty of the University of Connecticut. This year, he will retire as the President of the University of Connecticut Professional Employees Association (UCPEA), the union for professional staff at the university. While he will remain an active member of the UConn community, I rise to recognize his years of contributions to faculty and staff at the university.

Kevin joined the UConn faculty over three decades ago and currently serves as the Senior Associate Director in the Department of Student Activities. As Senior Associate Director in the Department of Student Activities, he advises the Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG), Kappa Alpha Theta, and Tau Kappa Epsilon in academics, community outreach, and personal and professional growth.